

CITY PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES

February 3, 2005

A study session of the City Planning Commission convened Thursday, February 3, 2005, at 12:00 pm in the City Council Meeting Room, 333 W. Ocean Boulevard, to discuss the General Plan update. The regular meeting of the Planning Commission convened at 1:35.

PRESENT: COMMISSIONERS: Charles Winn, Morton Stuhlbarg, Nick Sramek, Leslie Gentile, Matthew Jenkins, Charles Greenberg, Mitchell Rouse

CHAIRMAN: Morton Stuhlbarg

STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT: Carolyn Bihn, Zoning Officer
Angela Reynolds, Advance Planning Officer
Lynette Ferenczy, Planner
Lemuel Hawkins, Planner

OTHERS PRESENT: Mike Mais, Assistant City Attorney
Heidi Eidson, Minutes Clerk

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Commissioner Winn led the pledge of allegiance.

MINUTES

The minutes of December 16, 2004 were approved on a motion by Commissioner Greenberg, seconded by Commissioner Winn and passed 6-0-1, with Commissioner Rouse abstaining.

The minutes of January 6, 2005 were approved on a motion by Commissioner Gentile, seconded by Commissioner Greenberg and passed 4-0-3, with Commissioners Jenkins, Rouse and Winn abstaining.

SWEARING OF WITNESSES

CONSENT CALENDAR

Commissioner Jenkins moved to accept Items 1A, 1B, 1C and 1D as presented by staff. Commissioner Winn seconded the motion, which passed 7-0.

1A. Case No. 0412-08, Conditional Use Permit, CE 04-262

Applicant: Long Beach Unified School District
c/o Ron Hoppe, Representative
Subject Site: 1600 Atlantic Avenue (Council District 6)
Description: Request to install and operate an electronic message center (school announcements and activities only) at Long Beach Polytechnic High School.

Approved the Conditional Use Permit, subject to conditions.

1B. Case No. 0412-05, Tentative Subdivision Map, CE 04-247

Applicant: Subtec, c/o Cheryl Vargo
Subject Site: 1509 Stanley Avenue (Council District 4)
Description: Request for approval of Vesting Tentative Map No. 61763, to convert an existing twenty four unit apartment building into condominiums.

Approved Tentative Map No. 61763, subject to conditions.

1C. Case No. 0412-01, Tentative Subdivision Map, CE 04-244

Applicant: Subtec, c/o Cheryl Vargo
Subject Site: 1467 Obispo Avenue (Council District 4)
Description: Request for approval of Vesting Tentative Map No. 61683, to convert an existing eight unit apartment building to condominiums.

Approved Tentative Map No. 61683, subject to conditions.

1D. Case No. 9807-02 (Mod #4), Modification to an approved permit

Applicant: Long Beach Self Storage, LLC
c/o Nic Limer
Subject Site: 434 E. Willow Street and 2506 Atlantic Avenue (Council District 2)
Description: Request to modify an approved Site Plan Review relating to the perimeter walls, landscaping, parking and exterior building finish for a commercial self-storage facility on the Old Pacific Electric right-of-way.

Approved the modification request, subject to conditions.

REGULAR AGENDA

2. Case No. 0412-03, Tentative Parcel Map, CE 04-246

Applicant: Ruben Padilla
c/o Baldemar Caraveo
Subject Site: 3829 Maine Avenue (Council District 7)
Description: Request for approval of Tentative Parcel Map No. 62368 for the purpose of dividing one lot into two lots for residential development.

Lynette Ferenczy presented the staff report recommending denial of the proposed project. Staff found that the project was inconsistent with the development pattern of the neighborhood and that it would create a hardship on the adjoining property to the east.

In response to a query from Commissioner Stuhlbarg, Ms. Ferenczy stated that there was another lot to the north that faced onto Baker, but it was currently undeveloped.

In response to a query from Commissioner Sramek regarding the property to the east of the project, Ms. Ferenczy stated that any existing improvements could remain, but any new construction would need to comply with the current zoning and that would require a 20' setback from Baker.

Kelso Lindsey, attorney representing the owners of the lot, stated that the owners had previously been told by planning staff that the lot met the requirements for subdivision and based on that information they purchased the lot.

Mr. Lindsey distributed copies of a City of Long Beach Water Atlas showing that utilities had been set up for two houses fronting Baker on the vacant property across the street from the subject site, where he felt that homes had previously existed.

Richard Gutmann, 602 W. 37th Street, member of the Wrigley Heights Committee, stated that he was opposed to the project because he felt that it would change the character of the neighborhood and could be precedent setting.

Mr. Gutmann also remarked that it was his understanding that the vacant property to the north of the subject site had been purchased by the City for the development of a park.

Victor Vitrales, 3404 Maine, stated that he was in favor of the project and would like to see the applicants given the chance to build the houses.

Guillermo Sanchez, 622 W. 39th Street, stated that he was in favor of the project because the site was currently being used by people as an area to dump trash and he felt that if a home was there it would clean up the area.

Ray Pok, representing 7th District Councilmember Uranga's office, stated that while their office had no position on the matter, the staff report reflected many of the comments their office had received from the community with regards to maintaining the character of the neighborhood.

Mr. Pok also stated that the undeveloped lot to the north of the subject site was currently proposed as self-storage.

Commissioner Sramek stated that he felt that the project would penalize the house to the east by requiring a larger setback for future construction and that he had concerns about the safety hazards of having an isolated house in that location.

Commissioner Sramek made a motion to deny the Tentative Parcel Map No. 62368 and Commissioner Gentile seconded the motion.

Commissioner Winn stated that he did not support the motion and that he would like to know what the adjacent property owner to the east felt about the project and the impacts it would have on them.

The question was called and the motion passed 4-3 with Commissioners Winn, Jenkins, and Rouse casting dissenting votes.

3. Case No. 0412, Classification of Use

Applicant: Clair Milton
Subject Site: 5000 Lew Davis Street (Council District 5)
Description: Classification of Use for a proposed motorcycle safety training program to be located at Veteran's Memorial Stadium (Long Beach City College) in the Institutional Zoning District.

Lemuel Hawkins presented the staff report recommending that motorcycle training courses be prohibited in the Institutional Zone, however staff recommended that it be permitted in the Light Industrial, Medium Industrial and General Industrial Zones.

Mr. Hawkins also stated that a number of letters were received in opposition to the program including one from Long Beach City College stating that while they were not opposed to the program, they had concerns about the disruption of the lifestyle of the surrounding neighbors.

In clarification to a query from Commissioner Sramek, Mr. Mais stated that staff was recommending that the Classification of Use be denied for that location, which was zoned Institutional, but that for Industrial areas of the City it would be considered an appropriate use.

In response to a query from Commissioner Sramek, Ms. Bihn stated that Long Beach City College was the owner of Veteran's Stadium.

Clair Milton, applicant, stated that the training bikes that are proposed to be used during this type of operation create less noise than the normal noise on Clark Avenue.

Mr. Milton stated that he had a signed contract with the stadium to operate the business and that the college had intended to set up this type of program on their own.

Robert Gladden, Program Manager for the California Motorcycle Safety Foundation, 2 Jenner Street, Suite 150, Irvine, explained that the California Highway Patrol administers the program, which increases motorcycle safety on California streets and highways. He also stated that of the 69 sites his organization operates in California, 24 are located on high school or college campuses.

Mr. Gladden also stated that the 250 cc motorcycles used in the program are required to meet vehicle codes regarding sound and emissions.

Ken Glaser, Special Assistant to the President of the California Motorcycle Safety Foundation, commented that statewide no complaints of noise had been received by their organization even though 50% of the training had occurred at high schools and colleges in residential neighborhoods.

In response to a query from Commissioner Rouse, Mr. Milton remarked that the particular area of the parking lot that had been chosen for

this program had been selected because it created the least impact on other stadium operations.

In response to a query from Commissioner Greenberg, Mr. Milton stated that 60,000 square feet was needed per range and he was looking at providing 3 ranges. He further stated that typically the only place where unobstructed, well-paved areas are available is in Institutional Zones.

In response to a query from Commissioner Rouse, Mr. Milton stated that they would have control over the noise emissions from people bringing their own motorcycles to the training because these same people would have been notified that their motorcycles were required to meet legal requirements in order to participate.

In response to comments from Commissioners Jenkins and Stuhlbarg, Mr. Milton stated that he would be willing to arrange a demonstration run for the Commissioners and interested community members at the project site.

Gayle Schwander, Long Beach City College representative, stated that as a public service the college would allow for a demonstration run at the site so that the noise level and training could be reviewed.

Ms. Schwander also stated that while she was aware that there was a letter of agreement signed by the stadium manager, the contract was not valid until it was approved by the Board. The Board had discussed the matter and made the decision that the proposed project would not be appropriate at this time, due to ongoing construction and other major events scheduled at the stadium.

David Velkov, 3854 Clark Avenue, stated that he was opposed to the proposed use because he felt it would negatively affect the quality of life in the neighborhood. He also commented that he had gone door to door and found that many of the residents within the 300' radius were not aware of the project or knew nothing of the particulars.

Mr. Velkov, suggested that the PacificCenter be looked at as a possible location, since it was in the Industrial Zone.

Greg Wood, 3710 Clark Avenue, stated that he opposed any new uses at the stadium, because he felt that there were too many events occurring there on the weekends and that there needed to be a limit.

Elizabeth Troncoso, 3666 Clark Avenue, stated that she was against the proposed use because it would create more noise and debris in her neighborhood. She also commented that people from events at the stadium use the service streets and the neighborhood becomes parking impacted.

Florence Wilson, 3803 Greenbrier Road, stated that she was against the proposed use because it would create more noise and degrade the area.

Herbert Levi, 5153 Hanbury Street, stated that while he liked the idea of the training, he felt that it did not belong in a residential area. He further commented that the neighborhood had already suffered tremendous negative impacts from events held at the stadium.

Commissioner Stuhlbarg stated that because of several factors including the need for clarification from Long Beach City College about the program's status and also the need for a demonstration, he felt that the item should be continued.

Commissioner Rouse stated that he did not want to see the item continued because he felt that it was incompatible with the residential area. He felt that adding one more level of activity there was inappropriate and he wanted to see the project denied.

Commissioner Greenberg stated that he felt that staff should define which zones the use would be allowed in and require a hearing to grant a Conditional Use Permit. He also stated that he was not prepared to make a decision regarding the matter at this time, especially since the college indicated that it would not allow any new uses for at least a year.

Commissioner Greenberg then made a motion to continue the item indefinitely and to direct staff to amend the Zoning Code to clearly define which zones this type of use would be allowed in. Commissioner Jenkins seconded the motion, which passed 5-1. Commissioner Rouse cast a dissenting vote and Commissioner Winn had already left the meeting.

MATTERS FROM THE AUDIENCE

There were no matters from the audience.

MATTERS FROM THE DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND BUILDING

Ms. Bihn reported that the City Council approved an emergency one-year moratorium on bedroom splitting for the purpose of creating more bedrooms within a dwelling unit.

Ms. Reynolds reported that the item regarding Hansen Aggregates that the Planning Commission previously heard had been appealed to the City Council.

MATTERS FROM THE PLANNING COMMISSION

There were no matters from the Commission.

ADJOURN

The meeting adjourned at 3:40.

Respectfully submitted,

Heidi Eidson
Minutes Clerk